

Please add the following new claims:

- Sub B2
11. (New) A method for communication among equal-access stations of a ring-shaped, serial fiber-optic bus, comprising:
- during one bus cycle, a predetermined one of the stations generating strictly time-cyclical container messages, addressing the container messages, and supplying the container messages to the bus, the predetermined one of the stations supplying a synchronization message to the bus as an end message of the bus cycle;
 - each one of the stations writing respective data in the container messages addressed to the one of the stations;
 - each one of the stations reading data of written-in container messages on the serial bus as a function of a read authorization of the one of the stations;
 - each one of the stations reading the synchronization message and generating a respective interrupt as a function of the synchronization message, wherein depending on a respective position of each one of the stations, the respective interrupt being time delayed so that all of the respective interrupts are output in a time-synchronous manner; and
 - further processing the read data when the respective interrupts are output.
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12. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein the time delay is determined according to the following equation:

$$t_{vz.n} = [N - (n - 1)] \cdot 3B$$

where N = number of users

B = bit time

n = location number of the station.

13. (New) The method according to claim 11, further comprising:

continually providing to the serial bus addressed blank messages following a last addressed container message.

14. (New) The method according to claim 13, further comprising:
outputting special messages for filling up the bus cycle between the last generated addressed message and the synchronization message.

15. (New) The method according to claim 14, wherein the addressing and supplying of the container messages is carried out in accordance with an increasing address part.

16. (New) The method according to claim 15, wherein the addressing and supplying of the contain messages is carried out in accordance with an increasing subaddress part.

17. (New) A device for providing communication among equal-access stations of a ring-shaped, serial fiber-optic bus, comprising:

a respective interface module at each of the stations; and

two respective bus connector sockets at each of the stations, each respective interface module being connected to the serial bus via the two respective bus connector sockets;

wherein one of the stations is parameterized as a dispatcher station, and others of the stations being parameterized as transceiver stations, the dispatcher station including a list of all messages to be transmitted, and each of the transceiver stations having a read authorization.

18. (New) The device according to claim 17, wherein each respective interface module includes a programmable microchip having an associated erasable read-only memory, a read-write memory, and a clock generator, each respective interface module including a system connector, an opto-electrical and electro-

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Cont.

optical converter, and a voltage source, each of the respective bus connector sockets being linked to the programmable microchip by the converter, the programmable microchip being connected to the system connector via signal lines.

19. (New) The device according to claim 17, wherein the interface module includes light-emitting diodes for status display.

20. (New) The device according to claim 18, wherein the programmable microchip is provided as a programmable gate array.

Remarks

This Preliminary Amendment cancels, without prejudice, claims 1-10 in the underlying, and adds new claims 11-20. The new claims, inter alia, conform the claims to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules and do not add new matter to the application.

The above amendments to the title, the specification and the abstract conform the title, the specification and the abstract to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules, and do not introduce new matter into the application.

The underlying PCT application PCT/DE99/00098 includes an International Search Report dated August 3, 1999. An English translation of the Search Report is provided herewith.

The underlying PCT application also includes an International Preliminary Examination Report ("IPER"), dated April 28, 2000. An English translation of the IPER is included herewith.